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Healthwatch England Annual Report 2018-19



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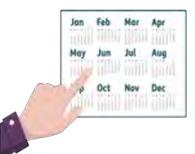
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Introduction



Every year Healthwatch England writes a report about its work.



Healthwatch England helps to make health and **social care** services better by:



- Listening to what patients say about their service.



- Writing reports about certain services.



- Helping managers in health and social care services understand what patients are thinking.



This report is about our work between 2018 and 2019.



Social care is support for people to live independently at home or in a care home.

About us



We want health and social care services to be good for people who use them.



We do this by finding out what patients think and telling the people who are running health and social care services.



We particularly try to listen to people who find it hardest to speak up.

Our aims

By 2023 we want:



- To have over 1 million people saying what they want from health and social care services.



- To be able to show that we have made a difference to health and social care services.



- Health and social care managers to be using twice as many of our ideas.

In 2018 - 2019



This year we have been talking to a lot more people:



- Over 20,000 people answered our questions about:



- The mental health of pregnant women and new mothers.



- The future of the NHS.



- Over a third of a million people told us about what happened to them when they had a health or social care service.



- More than 400,000 people asked us for advice.



- We wrote over 1,800 reports and had over 7,000 ideas for ways to make things better.

The future of the NHS



In January 2019 the NHS wrote its plan for the next 10 years.



We wanted people to have a say about how this plan would work locally.



We talked to 40,000 people.



We ran 500 discussion groups.



We went to talk to people at 1,000 other events.

What people said:



- People who had a job found it difficult to get an emergency appointment with their local doctor.



- People want to look after themselves more. They want more information about organisations that can help them stay healthy.



- People don't mind having to travel to get hospital treatment but they might need help with transport.



- And they want to recover near to their home.



- People want health services to use more new **technology**.



Technology is new ways of working using computers, mobile phones and the internet.



- People have to wait too long to get a mental health service.



- Often people are given medication when they need **talking treatments**.



- People with some conditions get a better service than others.



- People want to be involved in solving their own health problems.



- People want information in time to make their own decisions.



Talking treatments are where you talk through your problems with a health professional.

Social care

Care plans for people with dementia



The law says that everyone who gets social care must have a review of their care plan every year.



For people with dementia, we found that:

- They often have to wait for months to get the support they need.



- Less than half of their care plans are reviewed every year.



- Many people never have a review of their care plan.



A **care plan** explains what sort of support you want and when you want it.



Dementia is a disease that affects the brain. It can make people get confused and forget things.



What people think about social care



The government is thinking about how social care should be organised and funded.



We asked 2000 people what they thought:



- Nearly half of people would be happy to pay more tax to pay for social care.



- Young people are more likely to agree to paying more to get better social care.



- Older people are less likely to want to pay more for social care.



Dentists for people in care homes



In 2016 we wrote a report about how people in care homes weren't getting to see a dentist.



We wanted the Government to check that people were able to see a dentist.



This year we have been talking to parliament about this problem.



This year Government inspectors have started looking at whether care homes are helping people to see a dentist.

Unpaid carers



There are over 7 million people who are caring for someone at home.



They do this for no money. This saves the Government a lot of money.



Many carers are elderly and don't have good health themselves.



The law says that they should be able to get support from their local council.



We asked carers if they were getting any support.



Many said they had to wait a long time to get any help.



Many carers said that they only got help when they themselves had to go into hospital for something.



A lot of councils don't even know how many unpaid carers there are in their area.

Mental health support for new mothers



It is important for children that their parents have good mental health.



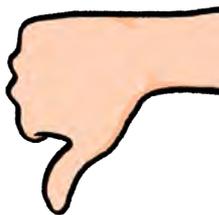
This year we collected stories from new mothers who had some mental health problems.



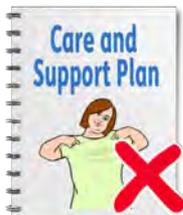
A third of women said that they hadn't had any information about mental health issues when they were giving birth.



Nearly half of women said that getting help for their mental health was difficult.



Over a third said the mental health support that they got was poor.



More than a half said they didn't have a care plan.



Over a third said that they weren't involved in decisions about their care.

Accident and Emergency (A&E)



Accident and Emergency (A&E) is the part of the hospital that deals with emergencies.



They are usually very busy. People often have to wait to be seen.



What people said

We asked 6,500 people what they thought about Accident and Emergency services.



- People said that they wanted a high quality service.



- People didn't mind waiting, but wanted information about how long they would have to wait.

Going back to hospital



There has been an increase in the number of people who are having to go back into hospital a day after they got out.



We talked to health managers about this.



They are now asking for information from hospitals about why this is happening.

The year ahead



The Government is looking at the future of social care.



There are questions about how it should be organised and how it should be paid for.



We want to make sure that people can have a say in this.



We will also be carrying on our work to get better services for new mothers with mental health problems.

For more information



If you want more information please contact us by:

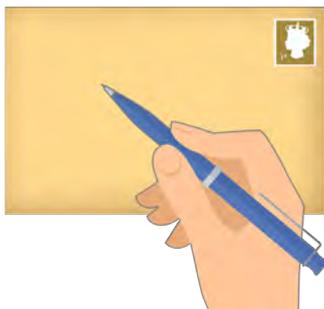
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